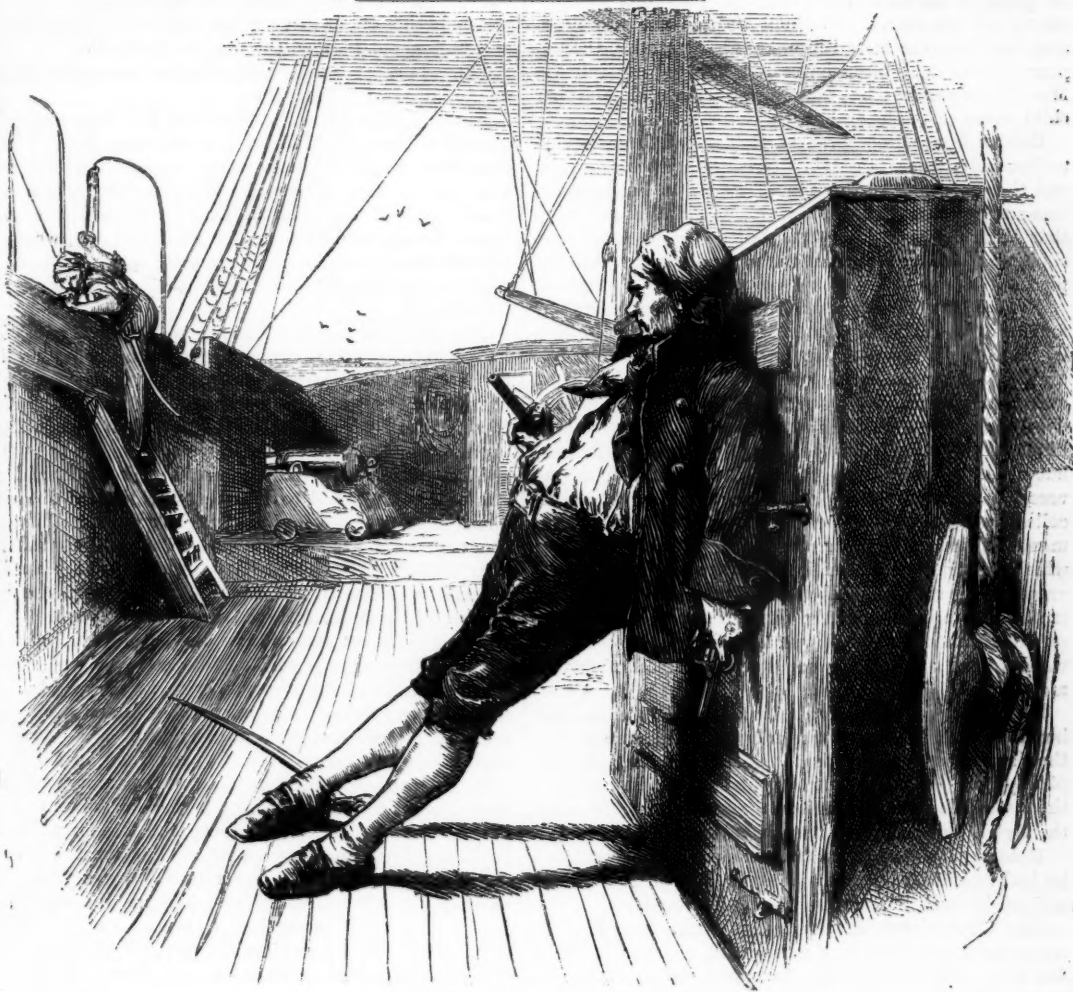


THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cooper.*



GOLDIE UNDER CUSTODY OF A STRANGE GUARD.

THE HEIRESS OF CHEEVELY DALE.

CHAPTER LX.—TWO FACES UNDER A HOOD.

To a scheming head and unscrupulous heart, the present difficulties were by no means insuperable. Mr. Mildrum's first work must be to discover whether the children existed; this ascertained, how to remove them came next.

The first object he soon accomplished, discovering Violet's birth and Goldie's arrival in England. With Violet he felt safe, knowing he could at any time induce her father to claim her, and thus, by the will, get her

disinherited; so that his attention was directed to Goldie.

"Here and there" he ascertained the fact of Mr. Boyce's tyranny, and of the impetuous impatience of the child's character: this was enough. He determined to establish himself on the spot, and watch his opportunities of turning these particulars, favoured by the laxity of Mr. Goldison, to account.

It was thus, under the name of Mr. Calder, he had taken the Rocky Heights; and during his stay there, having connected himself with the smugglers of the Bay, he watched every chance of gaining the youth's affections.

Having noted well his disposition, he met his fiery nature with praise of adventure, and extolled the fascinations of a sea life, and its independence, so charming to one naturally impatient of control.

Unconsciously, Goldie became completely under his influence; and when he left Nancy's hut on the Bay, it was to take refuge at the Rocky Heights. Mr. Calder—*alias* Captain Mildrum—could scarcely believe in the golden fortune that had led the prey so directly into the snare. Except Nancy Carey, who was sure he was at the Heights, and, on hearing of his loss, immediately sought him there, no one knew of his hiding-place. To her, when she had sought him, Goldie confided his intention of going to sea for a short time, and made her promise not to tell his secret. Without scruple she promised, and, believing she served him, kept her promise, though poor Nanny had often entreated her to break it for Mrs. Boyce's sake; but Nancy was as a rock, and her child dared not disobey her.

Hidden from all observation, Goldie had been carried to Cheevely, where Captain Mildrum had work to do, and there, passing as the son of Barrs—a hardy, reckless smuggler, and at one time a pirate, in fact anything that Mildrum made him—he whiled away a short time till it was safe to embark him for a more secure hiding-place.

Mr. Calder's intention was to educate him practically for the "free trade," and to secure his allegiance to him by involving him in such scenes as would place him, like his cousin Alvanly, in his power, and prevent him from ever returning to his old connections. At first the freedom of his life—life on the sea—and the fascinating kindness of the Captain entranced him with delight; but when he discovered gradually the character of the vessel in which he sailed, and her true design, he recoiled from the idea of belonging to her. An engagement with a small trader, the "Harriet," from Hull, in which the crew were sacrificed and the cargo seized, the vessel being scuttled and sunk, opened his eyes to the truth. He appealed to the Captain; entreated him to put him on board the next vessel they might meet homeward bound; and he vehemently promised never to mention what he had seen.

The Captain at first laughed, and called him chicken-hearted; but, finding it was not really the danger, but the disgrace and crime that appalled him, he told him plainly that "he might make himself easy; he had seen the last of England. His home henceforth would be on the high seas, and his nearest friend himself!"

Goldie passionately declared he would return; that he had looked for a career of noble adventure, not one stained by such horrors as he had witnessed.

The Captain was struck by his firmness. He had never seen him but as a most docile listener—a child. He had suddenly become a man, and was no longer a plastic pupil in his hands. Finding that no arguments could soothe, no promises reconcile him, he told him fiercely that he had treated him as his son, which all on board except Barrs believed him to be; but, if he showed any discontent or became refractory, he must be reduced to order as any other mutinous hand would be.

The spirit of his father was strong in Goldie. He became violent; but this only excited the scornful laughter of Captain Mildrum, who gave him in charge to Barrs, to keep him apart from all, and to give him a slight taste of discipline to cool him. Irons were ineffectual. He became sullenly resentful, not reconciled, not humbled. Barrs hinted a *rope's end* as the next remedy, and advised submission. The indignity of this succeeded. To avoid it Goldie feigned acquiescence; and, with an effort he

could ill conceal, appeared on the same terms as before with the Captain, feeling sure that he was closely watched by Barrs.

The Captain was vexed at the discovery he had made of Goldie's character. What should he do with him? how dispose of him? Drowning would be convenient, and, to make it easy, every opportunity of it was given to him; but he was so agile and alert, such a swimmer and climber, that he escaped from every snare. A bullet would have disposed of him, but, though always put in the foremost place, no bullet had commission to touch him. He came out of all strife unharmed.

While the Captain, who landed on the Bananas to take in water (those islands were then uninhabited), seriously thought of leaving him ashore as if by mistake, and was about to open the plan to Barrs, they spoke a vessel. It was a small craft, and the commander turned out to be Alvanly Tranicher.

Since Helen's death, her husband had been strangely altered. Through Mildrum's contrivance, he had been kept from England till to return would have been useless—for *her* sake. Deep fits of melancholy, which had amounted to frenzy, had at times possessed him, rendering him powerless to act for a season; but, when recovered from these, he found no relief but in the restless, reckless life he yet in his secret heart and better spirit hated.

Mildrum had not seen him for a long interval. He had hoped, by secret communication, to secure an interview on the African coast, whither he was now bound; but this unexpected meeting offered the solution of all his difficulties, and he triumphed in it as a fresh proof of his charmed fortunes.

With all the apparent warmth of interest and regard, he represented to him that Goldie was the only obstacle to his child's inheriting Tredorvan; that, by the arts of his uncle, he had been substituted for her; that Mr. Goldison had not only stolen his wife's regard from him at the last, but had got possession of his child in order to keep her birth unknown.

Stung with resentment and blinded by his passions, Captain Tranicher consented to receive the youth, who Mildrum assured him was only to be saved from his father's tyranny by the freedom of a seaman's life. He pledged himself never to lose sight of him—never to permit him to land—while he remained in charge of him. A promise from Tranicher was certainty; so that, independent of the fabrication of Goldie's absence from England being needful to secure the Tredorvan estate to Violet, Mildrum knew he was safe in trusting him.

Goldie's satisfaction at the transaction was great. His antipathy to his arch-deceiver made his life most galling to him while compelled to wear a mask of friendship. There was something in Captain Tranicher's manner that assured him; and, although Barrs was sent on board with him to watch, and in the event of his attempting an escape to prevent it by the security of a pistol, he felt comparatively free when delivered from his hated prison.

Captain Tranicher had a remorseful feeling on beholding him; ashamed that to enrich his child, though justly, this youth should be exiled, and driven forth to a life of crime and danger, but he dared not disobey Mildrum's orders. To make all the reparation he could, he won Goldie to study, and during the intervals of leisure endeavoured to store a mind that, with quick perceptions and ready powers, had remained till so late barren and uncultivated.

The conversation and manner of Captain Tranicher were pleasant to the youth, ready to like any one in

contrast with the man he now regarded with such fierce detestation. By degrees he found the labour of learning, that he had once so despised, both a solace and refreshment; as he learnt, he longed to know more; and the grace with which Captain Tranicher taught made each task a delight.

But the time came when it did not suit Captain Mil-drum to allow Alvanly Tranicher to continue longer at sea; he was summoned home that he might see his child in her domain, so it was said, having been told at the same time on what tenure she held it. When this took place, the custody of the young man was committed by Calder to an agent to whom no crime was difficult, and who was instructed to wear him out if possible, and never to suffer him to escape alive. Under this new state of things the captive thankfully had recourse to the books left for him by his kind tutor. He had learned to curb his impetuous temper; he had learned to weep over his childish-folly and ingratitude; he had given up all idea of escape, and had resigned himself to his fate as one he had chosen; but the loss of Captain Tranicher was a cruel aggravation of his sufferings. He was even grieved when Barrs left him.

Goldie soon found that the vessel he was now placed in was a pirate, and that he must expect a repetition of the scenes he had before witnessed. Among the crew—all of them savagely fierce—he was repulsively struck with the appearance of one, a short, square-built man, with a dull, dogged face, which nevertheless seemed to him familiar. This man was called Bluff Ben, from his taciturn manner. There wasn't a better hand on board, nor one that knew better how to give a blow to any molester; though, if left alone, Ben was quiet enough, more quiet than his fellows.

The captain having a project of plunder which would necessitate the landing of nearly the whole crew, while the vessel lay at anchor, the question was raised who was to watch Goldie, who was now openly treated as a prisoner. The mate at once proposed Bluff Ben. "There's no mistake about him," he said. "I'll warrant, if the young fellow stirs, it will be with a head full of bullets." Ben was questioned. He took to the job with the same air of *sang-froid* that always characterized him. Goldie having been secured in a dark enclosure about midships, he planted himself against the trap-door covering it, with his pistols cocked.

The last boat was lowered, filled, and had put off, they had all gained land, when Ben, partially unclosing the door, said, in a low voice, "Cap'n!"

Goldie started to his feet, and looked bewildered.

"Hush, cap'n; it's old Nancy!" exclaimed his gaoler. "My life for yours, but I'll get you off somehow; only don't ax a question now, and don't speak but when I tell you, else it's all up wi' us."

Goldie could hardly restrain himself. The voice in which no one but poor Nanny had ever discovered harmony was sweeter to his ears than any siren's music; it made his heart tremble with tenderness and sorrow—his good uncle, his home at Balla! Tears relieved him; and, the first effect passing, hope that had seemed withered sprung up vigorously. He knew Nancy well: she had succeeded thus far—she would carry out her determination. Having given him time to recover his surprise, Nancy again unclosed the door, and said—

"Couldn't you look a bit pleasant at the cap'n, as if you'd no objections much to be here?"

"I will, I will," said Goldie, almost choked with emotion.

Presently the boats returned. The expedition had been unsuccessful; the most active and enterprising of

the crew had been cut down; the plunder was hardly sufficient to pay for the loss sustained.

The captain, more ferocious than usual, looked at Goldie with an evil eye—a fine athletic fellow that might well supply the place of his first mate, that not only lay idle but kept another so in watching him.

A scheme for handsomely getting rid of him had already begun to weave in his brain when Goldie, to his surprise, sent to ask to speak with him.

"Send him fore," he replied, surlily.

"Captain, you have had losses. I am tired of an idle life—give me work. I am too entirely in your power to make my liberty any risk to you."

This address from the youth took him by surprise. Ruffian as he was, he felt the charm of the youth's air and manner, and, after a little questioning, closed with the offer.

From that time Goldie vied with the stoutest of the crew in labour and diligence; and the change, although it was heart-sickening to him to associate with them and hear their blasphemous and ribald jests, was highly beneficial to him. He hoped by actual usefulness to incline the captain favourably towards him, and, if Nancy's plan of escape failed, to work on his cupidity by promise of a large reward to give him liberty; but when, at intervals, he hinted this to "Ben," who, as much as possible, avoided him for fear of suspicion, she shook her head. "He dursn't claim reward—he dursn't be knowed ashore," she said.

So Goldie worked on, dreading, however, the next murderous encounter they might meet with. This seemed at hand. It was near sundown, a stiffish breeze was blowing, and, upon rounding a point of land, the "Don Alonzo," a treasure ship, was seen. The greatest excitement prevailed, and the chance of retrieving his late loss made the captain exult. As he was giving orders, Ben, sidling up with a mysterious air, pointed with his thumb to Goldie, who stood looking anxiously at preparations in which he was taking no share.

"Ha!" exclaimed the captain, "he mustn't be trusted."

"Trusted!" grunted Nancy, derisively.

"What is to be done with him?" said the captain, fingering his pistols.

"Let me put him ashore—*packed*," said Nancy; meaning, secured in irons.

The bull-dog nature of Nancy was an established notion, and the marked antipathy which Goldie always feigned towards her blinded the captain to any suspicion of connivance. They were still near the African shore, not far from the mouth of the Congo, on which the present trading stations did not then exist. It was arranged that, ill as he could be spared, Ben should execute his own project; and Goldie, protesting and gesticulating fiercely, was put into the boat, well secured.

A few strokes, and they were out of ear-shot. "Don't speak till we's ashore," said Nancy. A small sand-hill at the point of the estuary enabled her to conceal the boat from the crew, who, busy as they were, yet gave an anxious look-out for the return of so good a hand as Ben. But, once out of sight, Nancy set her companion at liberty, having possessed herself of the key of his fetters; then, cautiously crawling until the inequalities of the shore hid them from the vessel, they ran onwards to the interior, having one thought only—escape from the captain and crew.

In the wilds of Africa, unarmed and unprovided with food, except the biscuits Nancy had saved from her rations, those only who know what thirst in those

regions is, can estimate their sufferings. Sometimes the value of a draught of the ship's water seemed worth a re-capture. Not to Nancy, who bore all suffering as if she suffered not; only her haggard face betrayed her. Even she, however, was well-nigh spent. Eleven hours had they toiled on, and had not tasted water, when a sparkling stream infused new life into them, and hope returned.

The work on board had been too quick and too disastrous to allow of pursuit, so they concluded; otherwise their weary efforts must have failed to save them. Goldie had become a geographer; he knew they must be in the kingdom of Dahomey; he had heard enough of its king and people to dread exposing himself to them. The king was a noted dealer in slaves, and a rude barracoon, or negro pen, filled with the result of one of his hunting expeditions, was in view.

The sickening sight resolved them; they would return to the boat, and make sure at any rate of the sustenance the river would afford, and the giant vegetation of its banks would conceal them both from the natives, if they presented a hostile aspect; but their project was defeated. The king, accompanied by a band of Amazons, was on his way to the coast, where he expected some slavers to take off the negroes. Goldie and Nancy were seized at once. A great debate was held as to the disposal of the prisoners. Some were for sacrificing them to Kree Kree, a mumbo-jumbo thing they wear round their necks; but a profit-and-loss view of the matter decided it otherwise: they should be exposed to view to every slave-trader that approached, and a high price put on their ransom.

As there was little doubt that Mildrum would leave no stone unturned to trace them, their doom seemed sealed. No doubt an emissary of his would soon be in quest of them. Nancy's courage for the first time flagged, but Goldie's rose. He knew that the savage defences and force of the Dahomian captors were not to be dreaded like European bolts and bars, and resolved on their escape. It would extend this history too far to carry the reader through the horrors of an African captivity, and the dangers and risks connected with an attempt at deliverance from it. We cannot allow ourselves to enter on it: suffice it to say that he did effect it, as his presence at Balla was proof; but it was not till after long wandering, suffering, and privation, and many a hair-breadth escape, all of which Nancy had cheerfully shared, and which seemed to his hearers what Mr. Marvelidine had declared, enough to make the Arabian Nights look foolish.

CHAPTER LXI.—A TURNING IN THE LONG LANE.

BUT we must return now to Cornwall. When Mr. Tranicher had told all that he knew of the past to Violet, she sat with folded hands, as if stupified with what she had heard.

"You hate your father for his villainy?" he asked, and added, "I hate myself."

"Speak!" he exclaimed, violently, finding her silent.

Much agitated, she replied, "How could you bear to see Mr. Boyce at Tredorvan, and poor Mrs. Boyce?"

"I could not bear it: it maddened me; but I was driven on by that villain. He promised to provide for us—yes, to provide for us. He promised to meet us here, with ample means."

"And you would——!" exclaimed Violet, unable to finish her question.

"Child, child, I had sold myself. My life was in his hands. I was his puppet; and the disgrace of living on him was white, snow-white, after that."

Mr. Tranicher laughed hysterically as he spoke.

"Well, they are happy now, dear——!" Violet was going to say "Uncle Goldison!" but she stopped.

"Say on," said her father, with excited gaiety. "I have no grudge against the man. I have done him good—done them all good. I saved the lad from ignorance, and raised him to a capacity to enjoy what he has returned to. I am very happy, Violet. And now look at these guineas: what shall we do with them?"

As he spoke he threw them, and caught them with so unnatural a laugh that Violet became alarmed.

"We will go home, father. You have not slept for so long. Come home, and try to sleep," she said.

"Psha! Sleep! Why? We must get ready for sailing, child; sailing—come!" he exclaimed, starting up and seizing her hand.

Happily his fancy thus drew him homewards; and, once in the house, Violet entreated the widow to go for help—some one that could overcome her father, and force him to try and get repose. While she sought the nearest doctor, Violet amused him with pretended preparations for their voyage, which he constantly interrupted by some fresh fancy, though to move on and away was his prevailing thought.

Two weary hours had passed before help came; and grave, indeed, was the doctor's look when he beheld his patient. He was then in a paroxysm of excitement; it was a fearful attack of brain fever.

Those guineas! How mercifully had they come!—insensible to all want, all care, save such as his brain coined, the unhappy father lay prostrate under his malady. The fatigue and anxiety, as their last guinea drew to an end, promised to reduce Violet to a like condition. Surely now she might write to Balla! Was not happiness there? Was not their lost one placed in her possessions? But a feeling of desertion came over her. She would rather hide from those with whom her father's name was scorned, or ought to be. Carefully she guarded their story from the kind doctor; but he gathered a thread here and there from the incoherent ravings of his patient; names, places, incidents came out which he contrived to put rightly together.

"He is decidedly better to-day," said the doctor. "This attack, young lady, has been long coming on, and I trust it will in time be entirely subdued; and now I must take you in hand."

Violet declared she wanted no help. She would try to sleep. Broken rest was all that disordered her. She thought sleep was the best blessing of life: no care, no want, no sorrow in sleep!

"I had a letter from a lady the other day that knows your name," said the doctor, looking earnestly at her.

Violet coloured.

"She—she wishes to know if you are the same friend she had lost. She is—a very nice person. I had a letter from her this morning. Yes, a very kind letter; and there was one for you inside: here it is; and I have promised to obey orders, and be your banker till she comes; and that, as you will see by your letter, will be very soon."

Much of poor Violet's suffering vanished as she read the tender reproaches for her unkind silence, and the declaration that she should never again escape her loving friends. She read too, with inexpressible gratitude and relief, that she was not to be under any anxiety as to the future, for it was well provided for; she was not to scruple to draw on the good doctor for immediate wants. Soon, very soon, the writer hoped to be with her, and gladden her heart by a description of the joy at Balla, radiant now with the sunshine of Goldie's return,

and, if possible, to induce her and her father to return also.

"Oh! no, no, he will not; I am sure he will not," she said, as she brushed away the grateful tears; "and Mrs. Boyce must not come: it is a long, long journey. Perhaps in a little time my poor father will grow weary of this place, and then we may move northward; and, as our circumstances are changed, and all my cares removed, I can wait for the happiness of seeing my more than mother."

"Don't over-try your spirits, my dear young lady," said the kind doctor, soothingly, for he saw her agitation. "You have been sorely taxed, and have borne it well; now you must take good support—get into a good lodging—I have one in my eye—throw off all troubles, and feel that the best thing that you can do for your father and your friends is to take care of yourself."

Violet felt the wisdom of this, and tried to calm herself. She wrote to Mrs. Boyce with overflowing love and thankfulness, strongly objecting to her visit as a wholly unnecessary sacrifice, and spoke hopefully of their speedy meeting without it.

"Ah! Mr. Winkler; kind, sincere Mr. Winkler," she exclaimed, as, with a light heart, she prepared to take her accustomed watch by her father, while the doctor fulfilled his promise in procuring a lodging, "how truly you told me 'poverty in earnest is very different from poverty in romance.'"

CHAPTER LXII.—NANCY'S STORY.

GOLDIE'S story circulated through the district with additions it by no means needed to make it wonderful. If Nancy would have accepted it, she would have received universal homage; but, excepting that a softened expression and a most affectionate smile irradiated her dusky face when she heard her dear "captain" alluded to, she was unmoved by all complimentary notice.

During their weary wanderings she had related to Goldie the story of her adventures in pursuit of him, which story he, however, had had to draw from her bit by bit—for Nancy could not command language for more than one thought at a time—and to present the whole in an unbroken, intelligible form, like that in which "the cap'n" narrated it, would have been a harder task to her than all her achievements—a sheer impossibility—for which reason we prefer giving it to the reader as the good folks of Balla had it, to tiring him with her jerks of information, made plain, too, chiefly by her gestures.

Barrs, who had found her on the grave, had whispered to her as he gave her the rum, "Come, old gal, I can't stay. I have got a job on hand to-night at the Heights; don't say you sighted me." Nancy understood smugglers' talk too well not to know that the job would be mischief. When, therefore, she was enough restored to choose her way, she determined to pass the night at the Heights herself. She might be a check on the smugglers and preserve Zillah from alarm. Not that she suspected the robbery—she thought it was the stowage of contraband goods in the tower that was intended. With this trading-place it is needless to say she was well acquainted.

The presence of Barrs and Black Loddie, soon after the house was at apparent rest, took her by surprise. She ordered them off, and threatened to give them up the next day if they touched a thing. Laughing at her threats, they proceeded with their work, telling her she must help them to carry down the plunder. This she resolutely refused to do, and cook and 'Ailse became seriously alarmed at her defiant looks.

"See now, Mother Carey," said Loddie, holding a pistol to her head, "we're all friends here; there'll be never a squeak, and your head shall never ache again, I promise you, after the cure I'll give it, unless you'll swear not to split on us."

He was determined—she saw it, and swore. Then they knew themselves safe; but darker and darker her brow became, and when she left the house in the morning they thought it hardly safe to trust her. A small craft in the bay stood convenient. She was put on board. This, detained by winds, hovered about until the rescue of the prisoners made it a most desirable haven for them: they gained it, and Barrs, in a fit of intoxication, let slip to Nancy, who was ever on the watch to get it, the secret of Goldie's captivity. From that moment she felt that she had something to live for. She would follow him to the world's end—she would set him free.

Of the women she knew nothing. She thought old 'Ailse was cook to the crew; the other two were half-dead with cold, exposure, want, and sea-sickness.

They soon came across a vessel that had lost many of the crew by scurvy, and wanted hands. Nancy begged for enough man's clothing to complete her masculine appearance, and, offering her services, was accepted.

Nancy soon became a valuable hand, and her numerous changes from ship to ship, and from shore to shore, until she at length, to her boundless joy, found herself in the same vessel with "the cap'n," were enough to fill a volume.

REMINISCENCES OF A SCOT'TISH PARISH SCHOOL.

To most Englishmen the word "parish" has far from pleasant associations; and "the parish school" is connected in their ideas with sheer pauperism; but, to a Scotchman, all his remembrances of a bright and sunny youth, if he happens to have been born and brought up in the country, are associated with the parish school. For—I speak of the close of the first quarter of this century—unless the parish were very large, and had been situated in a manufacturing district, where the population grows very rapidly, there would be no school in his parish except the parish school. I knew no churches in my boyhood but parish churches, and no schools but parish schools. In my native parish there was but one school, and it, of course, was the parish school.

The parish schoolmaster in Scotland is a very important personage. His position and standing are both excellent. Usually he is the second man in the parish, the minister being the first. Even at the time I speak of, the parish schoolmasters were a well-educated and very superior class of men, though they have largely improved of late days. Many of them had been the full term of eight years at a university, and had been "licensed"—so the phrase goes—as preachers of the gospel; but, from the want of a patron, or of popular gifts in preaching, had failed in receiving an appointment to a ministerial charge in the Established Church. Many of them had spent three to four years at college, and, either from want of funds, or some other cause, had settled down into a parish school, halfway in their course of ministerial study. Their income, as a rule, was good; they had a fixed salary, varying from £30 to £35 per annum to begin with; a substantial and comfortable free house, and a garden, the house kept in repair at the cost of the parish; usually they had besides a small portion of land; a school-house, also kept in repair at the public charge: and all this in addition to

the fees from the scholars, which, in our parish, varied from two to five shillings a quarter. The ecclesiastical affairs of a Scottish parish are managed by a court consisting of the parish minister and "the elders," called "the session;" a body of men chosen by the parishioners for their gravity, wisdom, and piety; and of this court the schoolmaster was nearly universally clerk; as such, he is called "session clerk," and as such he has fees—for the proclamation of banns of marriage, from ten shillings to a guinea; for the registry of births and deaths, and for certificates of church membership. In addition to all this, the schoolmaster holds many little offices connected with the parish; and usually he is, or was, the only "land surveyor" to be had for miles round. All these sources combined yield a comfortable income in a country parish, where living is cheap, and opportunities of spending money few.

Our parish school was a humble and primitive building. It was a simple oblong of one apartment, whose walls did not exceed twelve feet in height, with windows of various sizes, scattered irregularly round it; a thatch roof, and a floor of hard-trodden clay, with morsels of paving stone along the passages. A few double tables ranged along the middle, and single ones round a portion of the side walls; a desk of state for the master; a huge stone about four feet by two and a half, and, say, two feet high, which stood in the middle of the floor, vacant all summer, and on which was placed a small stove all winter, which we boys kept at a red heat without fail. That was the whole furniture.

They are thinning down now, and but few are left, yet I know, and have known, many noble men and women who have filled and are still filling important posts in society with ability and honour and much credit, who got all the education they ever received at that parish school. Every child in the parish—rich and poor, gentle and simple, male and female—was educated together: there were the sons and daughters of the wealthiest farmers and small proprietors; there were the children of the tradesmen and mechanics; there were the children of the agricultural labourers; and there also were the children of what in England, in this day, would have been the pauper class. For there were a few children in our parish, orphans, or whose parents were so poor as not to be able to pay for their education; but the ecclesiastical court of which we have spoken—technically called "the session"—paid the fees for them; and in our parish there was not a single child who grew up without education, and they were all, I repeat, male and female, educated together within the same four walls. The only difference lay in the length of time during which the children remained at school, the branches they were taught, and the degree of regularity of their attendance. The boys and girls were in the same class; they were intermingled according to the degree of ability; they were treated in all respects as if they had been of the same sex—or rather, and more accurately speaking, as if they had been of no sex at all. The only difference I can remember is, that the girls got—possibly they deserved—fewer beatings, and were let off more easily in many ways than we boys were. Out of doors, in the large open play-ground, the mass of the girls separated themselves naturally from the boys—as their fun was of a quieter sort than ours, and their games and tastes differed. And I can answer for it that, so far as my memory and knowledge extend—and my memory of school goes back as far nearly as my life—good and only good was the result. A few reminiscences of a state of things passing rapidly out of the memory of the men of this generation may not be without

interest to the reader.* The fire in the parish school, during the long winter months, used to be kept burning by the daily contributions in kind of the scholars. One brought a piece of wood; another a lump of coal; one came laden with mill-waste, from a very small flax-mill in the neighbourhood; one brought chips and shavings; another an armful of peat: and all these contributions were cast into a corner, out of which the fire was fed and cared for by a boy chosen as fireman for the day. But this ancient usage was about that time passing away. A fixed charge of something like a shilling or eighteenpence a year for "coal money" was afterwards paid; the stove was erected, and the schoolmaster found the coal and received the coal money. The first Monday of the year, after New Year's Day, is called in Scotland "Handsel Monday"—"handsel" being equivalent to *douceur*—and it is kept up in many parts of Scotland as "Boxing Day" is in England. Every scholar brings "handsel" to the schoolmaster on that day. Within my memory, a pretty large sum used thus to be added to "the master's" income; but this custom too is disappearing rapidly, if it is not already gone.

A certain day in the year was called Candlemas Day, a relic of old Popish times. Of that day intimation was given beforehand by "the master," and, when the day came round, every scholar brought his present of candles, in kind, to "the master." It was a strange sight to see: candles of all shapes and sorts and sizes—dips, moulds, and home-mades—candles of wax, and candles of tallow; family vying with family which should send the best, and the biggest, and the most. "The master" never needed to sit in darkness in our parish when I was a boy. That custom, too, is passing, if it has not passed, away.

Our holidays were few and far between. Saturday was a half-holiday. That day was always devoted to Bible and New Testament reading, and the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism. The younger portion learnt the catechism pure and simple; the seniors learnt also "the proofs" from Scripture. In those days I could have begun at the beginning and repeated that catechism to the end, proofs and all, without missing or misplacing a single word. The catechism was lodged in my memory, that was nearly all; for good or evil, there it was a fixture for ever; and there it remains, I am thankful to say, accessible still.

In two neighbouring parishes was an annual market. These two market days were whole holidays. In June and in July they were held; and oh, the deep, the unutterable joy of those long, long holidays, long looked forward to, long looked back to. The tents, the merry-go-rounds ("hobby-horses" we called them), the whistles, the ginger-bread, and "sweeties," the peep-shows and the punches, and all the excitements of a village fair. Days to be remembered, those two annual holidays were.

Once a year, too, the parish school was examined by a committee of the presbytery of the bounds. For ecclesiastical purposes Scotland is divided into synods and presbyteries. A synod comprises in its bounds a certain number of presbyteries; and a presbytery, usually named after the chief town in its bounds, comprises a certain number of parishes or congregations. Our presbytery annually appointed a committee of its clerical members,

* Just without the borders of my earliest possible memory, but close upon it, lies a strange fact. The parish school, at Shrovetide, used to be turned into a cock-pit for the day; and each boy who chose brought his fighting-cock. They were pitted against each other in the school, the "master" himself being master of the ceremonies; and the boy whose cock gained the victory was "king of the school" for the year. I have often heard my father talk of it as a thing within his own knowledge, but in my schoolboy days the very memory of it was rapidly passing away—

usually consisting of four or five (of whom the parish minister was always one), to examine the school, and report on its state of efficiency. Her Majesty had no other inspectors of schools, in those days, in Scotland. The day was fixed weeks beforehand, and the preparation went on keenly in anticipation. Chapters of the Bible, psalms, extracts of poetry were committed to memory in readiness for the great day. There was extra drill in every department. Fresh writing-books were provided and filled in with double care. Places were marked for prizes, three being provided for each class. And there were prizes also for proficiency in geography, for English grammar, for arithmetic, and specialities. Extra hours for particular efforts were set apart, and altogether the examination day gave a wholesome stimulus to our usual labour.

At length the great day came round. There had been much extra cleaning within and without. The children all came in their cleanest faces and Sunday garments, and everything betokened that business of mighty importance was about to be transacted. We met an hour earlier than usual that day. The last polish was put on, and the final wipe and rub given before the inspection began. A hush of expectation; "the master" is anxiously looking at his watch—that big gold watch, with the massy bunch of seals, which we all used to think was so prodigious an investment of capital. There is no difficulty in preserving silence, for every little ear is strained to catch the rumble of the coming wheels. There they are! one, two, three, four—and all ministers; two of them strange men from ten miles away, whom we have never set eyes on before—not in gowns and bands, but in coats and nether garments, like other men. There they are, standing right in the midst of the breathless group.

The examination begins; and, on the whole, it is rather perfunctory. The various classes in turns read and spell, and show their books of writing and of arithmetic; they repeat many psalms and much catechism; arithmetic, mental and other, is gone slightly into; the few boys who are in the Latin class are examined more at length, and with more gusto; the prizes are distributed, with a small word of kindness to each recipient; then an address is given to the school as a whole, exhorting us all to be good boys and girls for evermore. "The master" is thanked and congratulated on the efficiency of his school. The parish minister asks for a whole holiday to the children on an early day, for the sake of the ministers, and at their request; and the examination day is over. But that whole holiday that followed; it still remained.

To me that day was always one of the brightest and sunniest days of my year. I spent it usually in catching trout; with no rod and fly, or falsity of a worm on a hook—but in a fair, honest, stand-up fight between each special trout and myself was the thing done. Stripped to the shirt and trousers, with the trousers rolled up above the knee and the shirt sleeves to the shoulder head, in we went to the "burns"—rivulets, I suppose, in English—and groping under the banks, and beneath stones, with a marvellous dexterity, and most rare relish, caught the enemy in his lurking-place, cast him to the bank, slew him, and pocketed him. I have often caught, in a holiday afternoon, from twenty to thirty delicious freshwater trout in that way; and, reader, if you want a morsel sweet and delicate, try to catch one of these trouts in that way; clean him thereafter, fry him, with a little dash of salt, and eat him, with a piece of fresh oatmeal cake, well buttered. Turtle soup at a lord mayor's dinner is nothing to it. Another way I used

to spend these holidays was by going to the hill—the distance was about two miles in all from our house to its very top. I used to go to the top of that hill, and roll down the steepest places, then up again to the top, for the pleasure of rolling down again; and then, when tired, I used to lie down on my back on the heather, and look up at the glorious clouds as they floated and basked, and bathed in the glorious sunshine, row after row, and swathe after swathe: I lay there and dreamed; lay and built castles in the air; the sheep feeding around me, the wild cry of the plover in the distance, and all besides still with that speaking, mysterious silence of nature that makes you feel one with her, and part—an essential part, though only a minute unit—of her vast whole. I have no holidays now. I do not expect to see any more holidays in this world. The days are all now so short. The days get shorter as they get fewer; the speed of the flight of time seems ever more rapidly to increase as the weary journeyer approaches the confines of eternity.

T. A.

ON THE NILE.

BY HOWARD HOPLBY.

CHAPTER XV.—IN THE UPPER COUNTRY.

"Through the brown arches thick of aged trees
That now on every side his steps enclose,
And in their tropic gloom, to strike or please,
At every strange new turn some strange new sight he sees."

The peasant women of Upper Egypt are of a different type from those nearer Cairo—dusky of skin and better formed. Indeed, the natives wax darker and darker as you near the Tropics. The aspect of the country, too, is changed. You could paint no pleasanter ideal of a summer land than the Egypt above Thebes. The purple desert mountains press it more closely in, assume wilder and more fantastic shapes, and revel in ruddier hues than below. They also enclose a landscape of greater fertility and more tropic in cast. Sooth to say, the narrower the territory to be husbanded, the thrifter seems the husbandman. In these summer regions all is growth, even to the desert's edge. You wander through fields of millet and maize, and between bright flanking patches of the yellow-blossoming cotton. You rove amid thickets of ricin and meadows of poppy in bloom. Your heart is gladdened by clustering palm-groves, which whisper of peace and plenty, where every bright leaflet is tipped with an autumn gold and mellowed by the tropic sun; and, from the midst of that lustrous gloom, your eye may range over acres of sunny corn-fields, whose rich wealth of produce waves within sling-shot of eternal barrenness. The natives are nobler than those of the lower country: perhaps freedom from all contamination with towns and cities produces this higher type. Anyhow, the fact remains, manifest not only in the peasant's outward look, but in his very way of life, and especially in the aspect of his land.

The manner of taxing in the upper country is ingeniously adapted to stifle the industry of the people. The pasha holds the land in fee simple, and, in these rich date-growing regions by the Cataract and in Nubia, he perversely gathers his toll by taxing each sakia (£3 a year), and levying two piastres upon every palm. Now the produce of the country depends entirely upon the number of these sakia water-wheels, and upon the assiduity with which they are worked. They multiply in the river reaches of the upper Saïd, and, but for this, would abound still more. Pretty picturesque objects these sakiyas are, with their palm uprights and rustic roofing, over which the gay creepers climb and intertwist,

sheltering the sleek buffalo and his boy driver from the blaze of the noonday sun. To mitigate the tax, thrifty peasants work them by relays night and day. Thus the melancholy drone of the creaking shaft comes borne to you, like a spirit-wail, on every fitful breeze from the banks

in a red turban and long beard, stood before us blubbering like a child.

"What's the matter?" I said, soothingly.

"Look!" he replied, ramming his fists into his eyes like a school-boy. "Look!"



KOUH OMBOS.

of the river all the livelong night—a lullaby to send you to sleep, or a companion to beguile dim wakeful fancies into the land of dreams. The song of the buffalo-boy, too, is heard from distance to distance along the shore, and the shout of the shadoof man, as, beneath the moonlight, he dashes out bucket after bucket into his trough, and sends the waters hurrying in a thousand little silvery rills over the pleasant fields and gardens:

"Transparent streams, whose waters go
Through the palm-wood, serene and silent in their flow."

There is nothing the peasant hates so cordially as paying taxes. Indeed, he exhibits a singular shyness even at sight of a tax-gatherer, and resorts to all manner of stratagems to avoid him. And no wonder, for torture is sometimes used by these officials to extract the toll. Furthermore, there is no coinage of the country. Consequently, the impost is gathered in kind. Maize, lupins, tobacco, dates—go into the exciseman's *cangia*, and the reckoning as to value is never very close. "Half my corn is gone, the food of my little ones! May their faces be blackened!" was an exclamation we one day heard while seated under a palm-copse, sketching a picturesque hut and pigeon-tower. A most respectable-looking fellow,

And he fairly gave way as he pointed to where, through the trees, we could see the pasha's men at work reaping his crops. And the poor fellow wrung his hands and ran off to his home in the village.

The Professor and I took a lesson of impudence from Saïd in respect of these villages. We penetrated their intricacies, and pried remorselessly into their most secret hareems. Our adventures were more amusing than important. We found great sameness in the general disposition of the dwellings, but the tone of primitive simplicity which pervaded the domestic arrangements was delicious. Each establishment was in fact nothing but a confined court enclosed by rough mud walls, low enough for you to peep over and survey the family circle, but giving no shelter from wind or—wet I was about to add, but wet never comes to molest the dwellers in this rainless clime. A palm or two by the wall affords a kindly shadow by day, and serves for covering at night. These happy Arcadians! they are content with very little. Fancy a mimic water-butt made of burnt mud for sleeping in! Such in appearance is the contrivance set in mid-court. We were incredulous at first. "Impossible," exclaimed the Professor to a fussy *fellaha* who,

with great pride, was conducting us over her abode, a little naked brat riding astraddle on her shoulder. "Never, madam! Your family can never all sleep there!" "They do," she said: and the lady, who, though

distributed. Sometimes plastered over the lintel, as a climax of magnificence, our old friend the willow-pattern plate may be seen, of which a specimen or two has been picked up thus far in Africa. But, clustered together in picturesque grouping, these houses, with their environments of gardens and palms, constitute a picture, whose chief lines, sloping from the vertical, recall vague visions of Egyptian temples in miniature, and set you a-musing on the past. Often in their vicinity there is a little creek or canal running up from the river, and upon its banks are gardens full of trees—banana, pomegranate, citron, locust, fig—which, laden with tempting fruits, droop over the low mud wall enclosing them. Hither children come to play. In the summer inundation the villagers may sit under their palms and gossip while the pleasant waters creep up to their very feet, but in winter time the maidens must take their water-pitchers to the river bank, often far away. Morning and evening sees them at this winsome task, sometimes in procession, sometimes alone, always erect as a lily, and gliding with graceful movement through the trees or along the shore.

It needed, as I have hinted, no small address to get into conversation with these damsels, or with the children in the villages. Being determined, however, to see as much domestic life as we could, and to purchase as many souvenirs as possible, the Professor and I introduced ourselves into every village we came near. Spite of much circumspection, we were usually taken for savages on entering. We had to prove that we were tame. The first impulse with girls and children was to scamper away. The elder women would often decline to hold parley with us; and as for the men, why, they

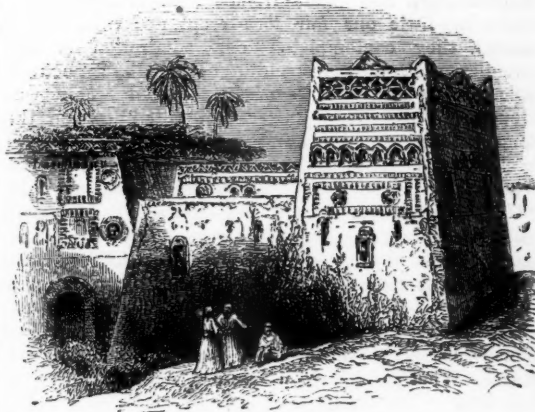
were out at work or away in the fields. Thus, you see, we were beset with perplexities. The Professor held that the shortest way to a woman's



THE DOUM PALM (*Cocifera Thebaica*).

not more than five-and-twenty, looked at least fifty, and was wrinkled to boot, proceeded at once to explain how it was managed. It appeared that each individual went to bed with his head thrust through an arch under the cover of the butt, leaving his legs outside in the cold, radiating like the spokes of a wheel. The Professor was asked to get in and try, but he declined politely, though with decision. Above the "butt" there was erected a kind of flat oven, where the family bread was baked—a broad circumference of dried mud, capable of being heated by charcoal fires in a caldron-like chamber beneath, and upon which thin cakes of dough could be cooked very cleverly. Then there was a little brick contrivance in the corner for boiling a pot over a fire of thorns. Such, I think, constituted the whole furniture of this "model home," save, indeed, a cupboard or two of mud, fitted with a rough wooden door and hasp, plastered to the wall. The door of the dwelling was a masterpiece of art, made up of palm branches intertwined with reeds, and hung on hinges of plaited palm-fibre.

Some of the villages boasted of grander houses, of course: in fact, the more wealthy class live in tenements made of slime and unburnt brick, ornamented with successive impressions of the open hand, elegantly



SHEIKH'S HOUSE IN UPPER EGYPT.

were out at work or away in the fields. Thus, you see, we were beset with perplexities.

The Professor held that the shortest way to a woman's

heart was through her child; and upon the strength of this proposition, right or wrong, we based our operations. I believe he was right; anyhow, it succeeded splendidly. We bribed with sweetmeats the little dusky babies that lay rolling and tumbling about everywhere, patted them on the back, and appeared lost in admiration at their beauty. One by one the women would sidle up, and greet us with kindly smiles. The girls and children who had run away and were peeping round corners, or timidly watching us over mud walls, would approach and warily draw near; and so until finally we had become the attractive centre of a host of admirers. That result once attained, everything went easy. Every house in the village was thrown open to us. No longer were we forced to look over the engirdling wall into the domestic circle: we were introduced into its very midst. The goats and the babies and the other dwellers in the family mansion fraternised with us as if we had been to the manner born. Every secret was shown to us; we were hail-fellow-well-met with all. Bribery and corruption, in fact, carried the day.

I have another illustration proving the Professor's point. One day in the country near Edfou, weary and parched with thirst—for, after inspecting the great temple, we had wandered far away among the hot desert rocks "tomb-hunting"—we passed through a cotton-field on our way back to the well-known but distant streamer seen through the palms on the river. A number of women, young and old, were distributed among the thicket of bright blossoming shrubs around us, half revealed, half hidden in the green. They were leisurely picking at the fluffy cotton-pods, and a fair sprinkling of dusky little urchins were left to crawl in the dust at their feet. It was a pretty sight. But just then we were more enthusiastic about a *golleh* or two of water we caught sight of standing between the rows of the plantation than at the picturesqueness of the scene. How delicious in the East is a draught of water to a thirsty soul! "Will you give us to drink?" said my friend to a bevy of damsels, each of whom might have stood model for a Rebecca. And he pointed first to his mouth, and then to the water. No; they refused utterly. In fact, one or two more heartless than the rest, laughing defiance, ran off with the *gollehs* and hid them. "Play with the brats," said the Professor. So we stooped down and made friends with the little fry. Little by little our fair foes crept up; their hearts thawed, they contemplated our admiration of the juveniles with a corresponding sympathy; goodwill supervened; and ere long the coveted water was brought to us. The pitcher was tilted low on the damsel's arm, and we drank and went on our way refreshed. "What sayest thou to my proposition?" asked my friend. "I say you are a hypocrite," was my reply. "Undoubtedly, but does it not answer?" Ah! well, spite of his arsenic pots, and strong-bodied spectacles, the Professor was soft of heart, and little children came to him quite naturally, as though they knew he loved them.

A shrubbery of green, starred over with yellow blossoms—such is a cotton field, a sight to make one muse. What an element of power that little fluffy pod has been in the world's civilization! And yet cotton fabric is no new thing. Egypt was first with it, as with most inventions. The ancient Egyptians were the first cotton-spinners. "The natives call this little shrub gossypion, others xylon. Its fruit, resembling a bean, surrounded by a bearded envelope, contains down which may be spun; and the natives work it into a fabric

equal in softness to any. The Egyptian priests wear robes of it, to which they attach a high price." So says the old writer.

Off El Kab, where stood the temples of Eileithyas, now in ruins, old Hadji ran us up on a dreadful sandbank, and there we were stranded all day. Not all the pushing and howling and invocations to Allah of the whole crew, captain, Hadji, and cook, could induce the "Lilla" to budge an inch until nightfall, when, with the waywardness of her sex, she floated fairly off of her own accord, and glided gracefully into mid-stream. There are some interesting tombs in the mountains three miles from the shore at El Kab, whither we wandered during the sunny hours of that day.

It was somewhere in this neighbourhood, I think, that Smith made a dead set on the crocodiles. Poor Smith! it went to his heart that he had hitherto failed in every endeavour to kill one. "Such bad luck, ill beseems a sportsman," moaned he. "What will they say at home?" And under this chilling blight he pined for many a day. But, indeed, a crocodile, being invulnerable to bullets, save in a little spot under the shoulder, takes a deal of killing. The crocodile's haunt is on little reedy islands and sandbanks, where spoonbills and pelican resort; there he basks in the sultry noon, and dozes till the going down of the sun. Smith's way was to take his seat at the prow while the boat was gliding over the smooth waters, his loaded rifle ready to hand, and reconnoitre the landscape through a glass. "Look you! there be one big one, sar." The caliph—who had a keener eye than Smith, glass and all—would whisper, pointing eagerly forwards, "Vare big beast; he no child that?" "Where? where?" Bang! and the rifle ball would hiss across to some neighbouring bank, or, short of that, plays ducks and drakes in the sunlight on the stream. But, alas! the crocodile was heedless of these gentle measures. You want a seven-pounder to pierce such deftly-plated sides. Heedless? not altogether so; for the big sprawling creatures, which from a distance look more like withered tree trunks than the hideous reptiles that they are, will look up querulously, and then with a droll wabble pitch themselves over into the water and be seen no more. The caliph, laughing from ear to ear at our friend's failures, consoled him thus: "Crocodile, him cunning fellow, sare; him smell Englishman gun a mile off; him no wait for gentleman—ya! ya!" An acquaintance of ours, however, killed one—a splendid old patriarch—in that bend of the river where the solemn ruins of the temple of Koum Ombos frown over the tide. He managed it thus. In the early morning his sailors dug a hole or grave for him in a sandbank eligibly situated—a sandbank known to be a favoured retreat or summer bower with these chilly dragons of the stream. Thither the sportsman, well armed, betook himself while the day was yet cool and dewy. He sent back his felucca, seated himself in the pit, and there lay hidden for hours on the watch. Morning grew on to hot noon; the kindly shadow fled from behind the heaped-up sand. The meridian was past. The sun fell straight in until he was nearly roasted. About noon two or three scaly monsters peeped out above the ripples inquiringly. Then they crawled up and stretched their big torpid bodies indolently on the sand. Then by-and-by each settled himself down to a nap. This was what our friend had waited for; he showed his head warily. They were as soundly asleep as any old gentleman in his after-dinner doze—all was still. The sportsman saw his chance, took good and deliberate aim at twenty yards—he had two other rifles handy in case of mishap—fired; and the shot penetrated more than a foot inwards from the shoulder.

The wounded brute plunged into the tide, struggled and gasped, and tore up the water; but the lead was too much for him. He went down, and was lost for five minutes, then came up labouring more violently than before. He was finally hauled into the felucca by ropes, and afterwards stuffed. Fourteen feet he measured from head to tail. It is not often such big ones are captured. The little fry, whose skin is penetrable, are the most easily killed. But then they are the most agile. When disturbed on a bank they wriggle off to the water in a trice, while the old wizened grandfathers and great grandfathers, who may be, for aught we know, centuries old, take the matter more leisurely.

We bought a young crocodile one day, "all alive." It had got entangled in a net. The fishermen bound up its jaws, and secured its feet with a thick string, so that the only weapon was its tail. They pitched it on our deck, and it flopped and turned summersaults, and looked at us angrily out of its little quick eyes. Crocodile tears are no myth, I can assure you; for this baby—who measured about four feet—blubbered like any schoolboy. Tears coursed each other down on to the deck. It was no mean antagonist, though, even thus chained, as young Saïd found to his cost. He had ventured to tickle it with a straw, and he got, I am happy to say, a sharp slap from its tail for his pains—a blow which taught him better manners, and sent him sprawling. Crocodiles seldom kill people. Tales are current, indeed, here and there, of occasional mishaps while girls are filling their water jars on the shore, but your sailors make light of them. The Egyptians, however, exhibit a curious hatred to these reptiles. It is superstitious. They believe them to embody evil spirits. It was only by a determined insistence that we kept our sailors from tormenting our infant visitor as above. They seemed to take a pious pleasure in giving it pain. All visible nature, to the Arab mind, is filled with spirits—spirits of good and of evil. The latter, alas! preponderate, and are ever on the watch to let slip their malignant powers. You must propitiate them. If you stumble or gape, tread on paper, or sit down on a parchment, you have to recite a counter-spell.

A Frenchman nearly frightened some *fellahas* out of their wits by setting off a musical box in a little village khan wherein they were assembled; and there is an odd tale of an English traveller, who, crossing the desert, was interrupted in the march of his caravan by djinns or genii. His servant came and told him that the Bedouins who had charge of his baggage would not go on. It appeared that, strapped up with other matters on the back of a sumpter camel, was found a hamper of Guinness's stout. The jolting of the trot and the sultry heat of the desert combined had been too much for the beer. One and another of the bottles became excited and burst with a loud explosion. The attendant Arab of that particular camel got nervous at the first shot, but when it came to two or three pops in succession he fairly took to his heels. Fear got the better of him, for he firmly believed Shaitan himself to be in the pack; indeed, the matter was serious. His brother Arabs came up, and a consultation was held. They decided, however, that it was not Shaitan, but the djinns. Anyhow, they determined not to go on.

Curzon, in his "Monasteries," relates that one day he caught a lizard by the nape of its neck. The brute opened its ugly mouth in a curious way, and wriggled so much that, deeming him venomous, he looked about for somewhere to bestow him. His eye fell on a glass lantern; that, he thought, was just the place for his lizard; so Mr. Curzon put him in, intending to examine him more

at leisure. It was in a bare open place among the desert hills. When the camp fire was lit and the sun had gone down, "one of the Arabs took the lantern to the fire to light it. He got a blazing stick for this purpose, and held up the lantern close to his face to undo the hasp, which he had no sooner accomplished than out jumped the lizard on his shoulder and immediately made his escape. The Arab at this unexpected attack gave a fearful yell, and, dashing the lantern to pieces, screamed out that the devil had jumped upon him and had disappeared in the darkness, and that he was certain he was waiting to carry them all off."

The superstition of your sailors generally partakes of the ludicrous, though it sometimes leans to virtue's side. I never saw people so tender-hearted to brutes. Our cook in killing meat went through certain ceremonies. I am not sure he did not beg the pardon of each sheep, or turkey, or fowl, before cutting its throat. I know that he turned its head toward Mecca, and I think he prayed the prophet to be merciful to it, ere the fatal knife went in. New moons and fiery sunsets have a meaning. I myself was under a ban for more than a fortnight as a sorcerer. It was in the Thebaid. It arose thus:—I was in the habit of taking readings of temperature, morning, noon, and night; and for the purpose of getting fair "shade" it was my plan to string the thermometer to the end of a stick and suspend it over the lee-side of the vessel. Now, this was unquestionable necromancy. What on earth did I want fishing with that ugly thing, if not to catch spirits? It was uncanny, to say the least of it. Old Hadji, in particular, and the more religious of the crew, began to look askance at me, and to recite prayers when I drew near to any one of them. But the prejudice might have passed had I not one day—one of those calm breathless days when all is sultry and still—said carelessly to the captain, "We shall have wind to-morrow, O Reis." We did have wind, as it happened—a regular storm—ten storms, a simoom of sand! Henceforward my character was gone. The thing was manifest. Had I not been brewing a tempest with my iniquitous fishing? It was that wretched thermometer that did it. Hadji was quite sure all along that no good would ever come of it; and now did not their worships see he was right? I was persecuted day by day. Sailors would sidle up to look over my shoulder while I was reading the degree, and cry "Battal!" "Battal" means wicked. Old Hadji, the ancient mariner, would fix me with his glittering eye, and frown a rebuke. And even Abdallah, a sturdy, stout, matter-of-fact fellow as ever carried a skewer of kabobs home from market, gave judgment against me. I was a dealer with Shaitan. So, at last, driven to it, I cleared up my character by means of a teacupful of warm water, into which I plunged the dreadful instrument. In fact, I gave a lecture to the assembled interested, but half-frightened, crew on the properties of caloric, etc., and so I escaped.

It is this cast of character, perhaps, so widely removed from matter-of-fact and commonplace—which looks for unseen living agencies in every working of nature that is mysterious or but darkly understood, and shapes its daily life on that belief—that gives to the Eastern his particular charm. He sees a hidden world underlying the world of common life. To him there is no incoherence in a fairy tale. He believes in it utterly, like a schoolboy. In fact, in many things he is like a grown-up child, retaining in age all the quick emotions and wild fancies of youth. There breathes an indefinable fascination about his way of thought. Thus the atmosphere of Eastern life, so utterly the converse of all that

one has been accustomed to, is refreshing to a wanderer from Western cities, and would be delicious as cool waters to a parched soul, were it not for its darker side. For there is a darker side, and it is accordingly as one perceives and apprehends *that*, that a true judgment is formed of Eastern character.

THE JEWS OF COCHIN.

In our May Part we gave an account of some colonies of Jews which have from ancient times been settled in the interior of China. Our readers will peruse with interest the following notice of the Jews of Cochin China, communicated lately to "The Friend" by a member of the Society of Friends:—

This people inhabit a town or suburb, about two miles from the city of Cochin, called Jew Town. They are divided into two classes, the white Jews and the black Jews, and dwell in different quarters of the city. Each class has its respective synagogue; but the great body of the latter, says Dr. Claudius Buchanan, live in the interior of the province. Dr. B., who visited them in the year 1807, gives us the results of his inquiry into the antiquity of the white Jews, from which it appears that they landed here after the destruction of the second temple; that the King of Malabar allowed them a residence at Cranganor, with patriarchal jurisdiction within the district. Other Jews followed them from Judea, Spain, and other places, and, after the lapse of about a thousand years from their first settlement, discord arising amongst themselves, one of their chiefs called in the assistance of an Indian king, who, with a great army, dispossessed them of Cranganor; some of the exiles, settling at Cochin, have remained there ever since, having been joined also by some of the Children of Israel (Beni Israel), from the country of Ashkenaz, from Egypt, Isola, and other places.*

The charter of the King of Malabar was engraved on a brass plate, the date of which they assign to A.M. 4250 (A.D. 490). Dr. Buchanan had a facsimile made of this plate, which is deposited in the public library at the University of Cambridge. He observed, "It is evident the Jews must have existed a considerable time in the country, before they could have obtained such a grant."

The black Jews, he considers, must have arrived in India many ages before the white Jews, and have become intermixed with the natives. The latter look upon them as a lower caste. They had a variety of mss., on parchment, goat skins, and cotton paper, some of the most ancient of which he procured.

Cochin is of itself a pleasing and interesting point. The traveller's bungalow overlooks the Backwater, which is here of considerable breadth, forming a harbour, where large English merchant ships ride at anchor. The mainland opposite is green with cocoa-nut palms. Along the shore, a few yards from the verandah, are curious *fishing machines* of bamboo, which are available for the purpose, by means of a net at one end of a loaded lever. To our left is a ruined Dutch church, and behind us the city of Cochin, with many quaint specimens of Dutch domestic building; beyond, we come to the open shore of the Indian Ocean, or, more strictly, the Arabian Sea. The Portuguese landed here on Christmas Eve, 1500; they found in the neighbourhood the ancient Christian churches, which, if not founded, as some suppose, by the apostle Thomas, are

certainly anterior to, and independent of, the corruptions and usurpations of Rome. Archbishop Menezes succeeded, about the year 1563, in destroying their records, and subjecting some of them to the Papal supremacy.

Taking a boat on the Backwater, we soon landed at Jew Town, about two miles off, and were not long in finding an escort, in a poor son of Israel, who had appeared yesterday as a beggar at the bungalow. We visited the synagogue of the white Jews, a square building, having first a court, then a small antechamber; by the door, opening into the chief apartment, is a chest with holes in the lid, for the reception of gifts. The room where they assemble is paved with Dutch tiles, and the seats placed round the walls; over the entrance is a gallery, which we were told is only used by the priests; in the centre is a kind of rostrum, railed off, and raised about two steps, and at the upper end, doors handsomely carved and gilded, behind which the books of the law are kept. These appear to be beautifully written on vellum, each roll standing upright, and carefully covered with a case. We walked through the long street inhabited by these interesting people, many of whom are as white as Englishmen, some of the Brahmin colour. Contrary to what had been represented to us, the streets looked clean and orderly. Many of the women were sitting in front of their houses, engaged in lace-weaving or similar work. The old women looked very desolate, but we observed some fine faces among them; and we could not but remark that, whether in Jew or Syrian, the contrast with the heathen, in everything that expresses moral beauty (if I may so speak), to the eye, was most strikingly in favour of the former. The black Jews' quarter is a continuation of the same line of street. Their synagogue does not present any material contrast to the other. They appear to be partly a mixed race, and partly the descendants of heathen proselytes. As we returned, we called on the rabbi of the white Jews, who received us politely in a neat upper room. We had some serious conversation with him, through an interpreter, before parting. Never before had I such a sense of the desolations of Jerusalem; nor had the touching descriptions of their old prophets seemed so vivid and forcible. Surely, the presentation of the truth in the love of it is what is now wanted for these poor people, rather than the attempt to connect them with any section of the Christian Church."

DOMUS DEI, PORTSMOUTH.



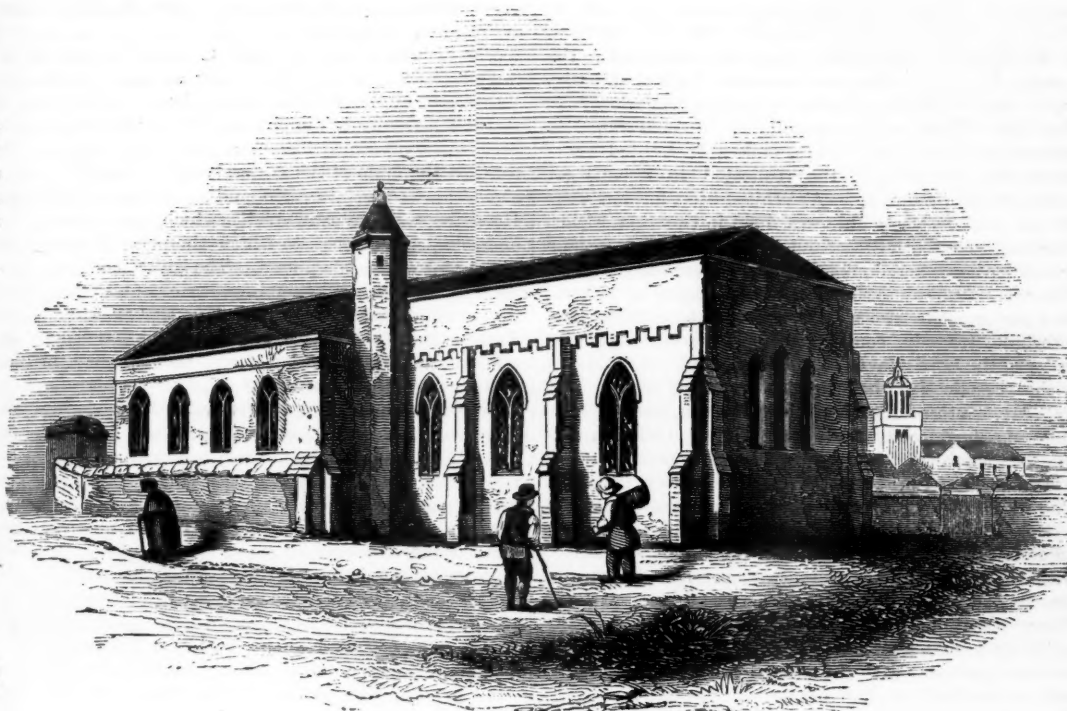
N appeal which is now being addressed to the army, navy, and the general public, for funds to restore the Garrison Chapel at Portsmouth, was noticed in No. 791 of the "Leisure Hour," in February last, accompanied by some account of the building, and its previous history. That chapel is the chancel of the church which was attached to the Domus

Dei, the God's House, as these early hospitals were called by the crusaders, who built them in emulation of

* Buchanan's "Christian Researches in Asia," 8vo, p. 201.

that which, about the middle of the eleventh century, had been erected at Jerusalem by the merchants of Amalphi trading to the Levant, as a refuge for Christian traders and pilgrims visiting the Holy City. That hospital was dedicated to St. John; and, when the

became vested in the Crown, and its lands passed into the hands of the Powerscourt family. Divested of its revenues, it was for some time used as the residence of the governor; but, falling into decay, it was pulled down, with the exception of the chancel of the church, with its



THE GARRISON CHURCH, PORTSMOUTH, BEFORE ITS RESTORATION.

hospitals of Jerusalem were confided to the care of the military, in 1099, the knights first called themselves "Hospitallers of Jerusalem," changed to Knights of St. John in 1121, then to Knights of Rhodes in 1311, and finally to Knights of Malta in 1530, in all of which the varying fortunes of the order are traced. In France, the Domus Dei was known as the Maison Dieu, a name still retained by many hospitals in that country, and which, in Paris, has been changed to the Hôtel Dieu, for the chief hospital and school of medicine in that city.

The Domus Dei at Portsmouth was founded about the year 1236, by Pierre de la Roche (Sir Peter des Roches, as he is also called), "a man well skilled in war," a knight, and a courtier, who had been to the Holy Land, and who, by a papal provision, had been placed in the see of Winchester in 1205. He was one of the most munificent prelates that the annals of the church have placed on record, though but a poor Poictarian by birth. Matthew Paris, who praises his numerous benefactions to religious houses, adds that, notwithstanding, "he left to his successor a rich bishopric, with no decrease of its plough-cattle." The seal of the Domus Dei furnishes the capital letter of this paper.

The church attached to the hospital was dedicated to St. John the Baptist and St. Nicholas; and, on the suppression of religious houses, the Domus Dei itself

three-light lancet window at the east, and transition-lights at the sides, and converted into a Chapel Royal, now the Garrison Church of Portsmouth. It has been recently stated that Charles II was there married to Catherine of Braganza, the Infanta of Portugal. This, however, is clearly an error. The marriage, according to the rites of the Church of Rome, as stated by our historians, was solemnised in a private room at Portsmouth, and a contemporary engraving, given in Heath's "Chronicles," which contains full-length portraits of the royal couple, whose hands are being joined by a prelate in his sacerdotal robes, surrounded solely by the accessories of a private apartment in the governor's house, seems to confirm this account. The public ceremony, according to the rites of the Church of England, took place in the church of St. Thomas à Becket, as appears from a richly illuminated entry in the parish register. During her stay in England, for thirty years, the service of the Church of England was performed in Portuguese in the Queen's closet; and in the reigns of James II and of William and Mary, and till the accession of Queen Anne, her name was retained in the Litany as Queen Dowager. The last authorised edition of the Portuguese version of the Book of Common Prayer was printed at Oxford in 1695. Having returned to Portugal in 1692, Catherine of Braganza died there in 1705.

CURIOSITIES OF CLERKENWELL.

II.

SPA FIELDS, or the Ducking-pond Fields, were, in the last century, the arena of duck-hunting, prize-fighting, bull-hunting, and other demoralising sports. Here gold and silver laced hats were grinned and run for, and an ox roasted whole. To cross the fields after dusk was dangerous. Jones, the city marshal, was here robbed of all his money by three footpads; and one Stanton, of Clerkenwell Green, was knocked down near the London Spa and robbed of his money, his hat and wig, and a pair of silver buckles. In the Sadler's Wells play-bills "There will be moonlight," was assurance to playgoers. On dark nights, link-ends lighted them across the fields, and they collected in groups for company and protection. At Whitsuntide, formerly, the Welsh or Gooseberry Fair was held in the Spa Fields. The site of Exmouth Street and Cobham Row was a grand course for horse and donkey-racing. About 1744, Welsh Fair was removed to Barnet. It is worthy of remark, that any persons who should presume to perform any interlude, tragedy, comedy, etc., at this fair, were by order of the Lord Mayor to be prosecuted. Spa Fields, within recollection, had its pasturage for cows; and here lay, south of the New River Head, a forest of elm-trees, destined to convey water in their hollow trunks to the north and western parts of London. Spa Fields became the hotbed of Radical politics in 1817. The whole district is now covered with houses.

Spa Fields Chapel, the circular building, with two adjoining turrets, has a curious history in connection with the reformation of the neighbourhood. Upon the site was originally an inn, the "Ducking Pond House." There was built, in 1770, the Pantheon, "a large round building, with a statue of Fame upon the top," in the midst of gardens, with "genteel tea-rooms," etc. This was a humble imitation of the Pantheon in Oxford Street, but was distinguished by its Sabbath-breaking attractions. The proprietor's wife foresaw that the building would be turned to a very different purpose, and so it proved. The Pantheon opened as a chapel, in 1777 as "a Bethel," and thus, from "a colonnade of profaneness," became a place for Divine worship, and in 1779 passed into the connexion of the Countess of Huntingdon, and became one of the wealthiest and most influential chapels in the metropolis. Its meetings were attended by the Duke of Kent, father of her present Majesty. Lady Huntingdon resided in the large house adjoining the chapel. Here she died, in her eighty-fourth year, having expended £100,000 in acts of charity. She was interred in a plain coffin, dressed in the gown of white silk which she had worn at the opening of one of her chapels. Spa Fields Chapel was spared by the rioters of 1780, on their being informed that it belonged to the Countess of Huntingdon. "One of the rioters (who was afterwards executed at Newgate) urged his comrades to spare the place, because his mother went there to worship"—and his entreaty prevailed.

The several springs in the district gave rise to places of entertainment. One, from its resemblance to Tunbridge water, was called New Tunbridge Wells, or Islington Spa, and was frequented, in 1733, by the Princesses Amelia and Caroline; in our time it became a tea-garden. The original Chalybeate spring is all that remains. Sadler's Wells originated in this manner, and was, before 1683, Sadler's Music House, with its spring of mineral water, visited by 500 or 600 drinkers every morning. It is now the oldest theatre in London.

Hockley-in-the-Hole (afterwards Ray Street) was an infamous place two centuries since. The Bear Garden was attended not only by butchers, drovers, and other mobility, but by dukes, lords, knights, and squires, whose seats were hung with tapestry. Steele has well described the place in the "Spectator," 1712, but it soon after fell into decay. Its history is sickening to read. In 1709 the proprietor of the Bear Garden was almost drowned by one of his own bears, before his friends were aware of his danger.

The London Spa is reputed to have been known as early as 1206. It no longer exists, and the site has been occupied for upwards of a century by a public-house; it was much frequented during the Welsh Fair for its roast pork and "oft-famed flavoured Spaw ale," which nearly eclipsed the fame of the mineral water. Hard by was a cockpit, a wonderful grotto, and an enchanted fountain. Here, too, was the New Wells, which had a theatre for operatic performances, to which the price of admission was a pint of wine or punch. The diversions were rope-dancing, singing and tumbling, serious and comic dancing, exhibitions of rare animals. In 1740 the siege of Portobello, with fireworks and the demolition of forts and castles, was the great attraction; then we had, in 1745, a giant seven feet four inches high, who performed on the rope, a Polander only two feet ten inches high and sixty years old, and a Saxon woman seven feet high; the grand Turk and his apprentice performed here on the tight-rope; and Hannah Snell, the female soldier, wounded at the siege of Pondicherry, went through the manual exercise in her regimentals. The New Wells was, however, converted into a tabernacle by the Rev. John Wesley, in 1752. Not far from the Wells, Mrs. Charke, Colley Cibber's youngest daughter, lived in a wretched thatched hovel, where she finished her miserable career; yet she was born in affluence and educated carefully.

Here we are reminded that in Shakespeare's time, in what is now Woodbridge Street, stood the Red Bull Theatre, "chiefly frequented by the citizens," and the rival of the Globe and Fortune theatres. Edward Alleyn, the founder of Dulwich College, played at the Red Bull. The price of admission to some parts of the house was twopence. Ned Ward kept an alehouse in Red Bull Yard, whence he removed to a punch house in Fulwood's Rents. Nicholson's distillery now occupies the site of the old theatre, of which there is a curious exterior view, published in 1662.

Battle Bridge, the ancient hamlet, is supposed to commemorate in its name the famous battle between the Romans and the Britons, A.D. 61; though the identity is doubtful, as Tacitus, in his minute account of the conflict, takes no notice of the river Fleet, which meandered through the site. The Romans had their summer camp on an eminence in the immediate vicinity of this spot, and of which traces existed until very lately, a little westward of Barnsbury Park, in the Thornhill Road, and opposite Minerva Terrace, in Reed Moat Field, now occupied by "Mountfort House" and grounds. The name of Battle Bridge has been nearly lost in King's Cross, named from a statue of George IV, set up between 1830 and 1835, in the centre of the six roads which there unite, and where now are Argyle, Liverpool, and Manchester Streets. And the corner of the Gray's Inn Road was, early in the present century, a mountain of rubbish and cinders. The ground on which the cinder-heap stood was sold, in 1826, for £15,000. We have, however, more precise information about Battle Bridge. To a tailor who had prospered here, was sold, in 1864, Garrick's villa at Hampton for £10,800. Most of the nuisances of Battle Bridge are driven out of mind by the stupendous

station of the Great Northern Railway, suggestive of incalculable benefits.

Bagnigge Wells, supposed to have been on the most ancient road from London to the north, is traditionally said to have been formerly a summer residence of Nell Gwynn, situated in the fields, and on the banks of the Fleet. On a square stone here was inscribed, "This is Bagnigge House, neare the Pinder of Wakefield, 1680." At Bagnigge House, in the garden, about a century ago, were discovered two mineral springs, then described as "a little way out of London." Here was found a bust of a woman in a Roman dress, said to represent Nell Gwynn. The place was opened as a public Spa at the above date, and soon became much in fashion for

"Drinking tea on summers' afternoons,
At Bagnigge Wells, with china and gilt spoons!"

Miss Edgeworth rates it more lowly—

"We cito to Bagnigge Wells repair,
To swallow dust and call it air."

There are several prints of the place, and "Punch," in 1833, gave a humorous account of Bagnigge Wells, with woodcuts. We remember the Wells nearly sixty years since, with its garden and round fish-ponds, with a fountain of Cupid striding a swan spouting water, a rustic cottage, and a grotto to contain twenty persons, and elder-bushes, willows, huge docks, and other riverside greenery, with bowers or boxes for tea-drinkers, and two pastoral large figures—a man with a scythe and a woman with a hay-rake and bird's-nest. Churchill is said to have written the poem "Bagnigge Wells," published in 1779. The ball-room had an excellent organ. There is in the City of London Library a curious collection of manuscript notes, sketches, and drawings of Bagnigge Wells house and gardens in their last days—about the year 1841.

With a glance at Pentonville we must conclude. This was the ancient down called Islington Hill, whence there was formerly a magnificent view over London. At the summit was Prospect House, with spacious bowling-greens, subsequently known as Dobney's or D'Aubigny's. Next upon the bowling-green was erected an amphitheatre, where Price exhibited his original feats of horsemanship, and Wildman his bees on horseback. At Winchester Place, now No. 61, Pentonville Road, lived Thomas Cooke, the notorious miser, who died worth £27,205.

Pentonville was the *ville*, or town, built by Henry Penton. Here Dr. de Valingen, the Swiss physician, built himself a house on a fanciful plan, upon the eminence, which he named Hermes Hill. It was then almost the only dwelling here except White Conduit House. In 1811 the eccentric preacher William Huntingdon, S.S., came to live in Dr. de Valingen's house. He married the rich widow of Sir James Sanderson, Bart., the daughter of Alderman Skinner. After Huntingdon's death, in 1813, at the sale of his effects by auction, his friends and admirers gave large sums for articles which had belonged to him. Thus, his easy chair sold for £63; his spectacles seven guineas, etc. In Penton Street, commenced about 1773, was a bowling-green and house of entertainment, called Busby's Folly, where, in 1664, met a fraternity of Odd Fellows, members of Bull Feathers Hall, who claimed the toll of all the gravel carried up Highgate Hill, and marched in procession, with trumpet and horn music, and a large pair of horns fixed on a pole, flags, mace-bearer, and herald, to claim their right; pioneers, with pick-axes and shovels, levelling the hill. The president of the club used to wear a crimson satin gown and furred cap, surmounted by a pair of antlers; on a cushion lay an ornamented sceptre and crown, and

the brethren drank out of horn cups, and were sworn, on admission, upon a blank horn-book. Upon the site of Busby's Folly rose the Belvedere Tavern, with a large racket-court and gardens.

In Penton Street was erected, in the reign of Charles I., White Conduit House, in a large garden with a fish-pond, arbours, and a cricket-field. Goldsmith used to drink tea at the White Conduit. In 1826 it was styled a "Minor Vauxhall." The house was named from the old White Conduit, which stood near it in the fields. It was taken down about 1829, and rebuilt; but in 1849 these premises were also taken down, and re-erected upon a smaller scale, the garden-ground being let on building-leases.

White Conduit Fields, now covered with streets, were in the last century much resorted to. Here, in 1784, were played the cricket matches which led to the formation of the famous Marylebone Club. Here, in 1779, George III met the Islington Volunteers. About ninety years ago, the Rev. Rowland Hill preached in the fields. Here was a noted ducking-pond, in which many persons were drowned.

We now reach the Angel Inn, which, though called "the Angel, Islington," is in the parish of Clerkenwell. The inn has been established upwards of two hundred years. The former house resembled a large old country inn, and the inn-yard had double galleries; a coloured drawing of it hangs in the present coffee-room. We see it also in Hogarth's print of a stage-coach, 1747. The present inn stands ninety-nine feet above the Trinity high-water mark.

Watchmakers, clockmakers, and jewellers settled in Clerkenwell in great numbers early in the last century, and several streets are mostly occupied by them. Colonel Magniac, a famous clockmaker, lived in an old mansion in St. John's Square, and had his workshops here, and his automaton clock did much to render Clerkenwell noted as a clockmaking parish. These premises were taken down, and upon the site Messrs. J. Smith and Sons have built their clock manufactory, the largest in Clerkenwell. Here the many branches of the trade, usually considered distinct, are carried on, so that the works present a complete manufactory of that wonder of mechanism—an English clock. In Northampton Square is held the British Horological Institute, for the cultivation of the science of horology, and the arts and manufactures in connection with it.

In St. John's Square is "Burnet House," early in the last century the town residence of Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury. It has been much altered, and tenements have been built upon the bishop's garden; and in the mansion, exclusive of the underground kitchens, there are twenty-three apartments occupied by numerous families engaged in box-making, picture-frame making, stay-making, etc., in the very rooms where the bishop received his distinguished guests. He died here in 1715; his remains were buried in St. James's, Clerkenwell. As the corpse was being conveyed there, the rabble flung stones and dirt at the hearse. "Burnet usually preached at St. James's Chapel; here he perceived, or fancied he perceived, that the ladies of Princess Anne's establishment did not look at him while he was preaching his sermons—"his thundering long sermons," as Queen Mary called them. He therefore prevailed upon the princess to order all the pews in St. James's Chapel to be raised high, that the fair delinquents could see nothing but himself in the pulpit. Hence the origin of the high pews that yet remain in some of the metropolitan churches, and are so general in country ones." (Noble's Hist. England; History of Clerkenwell).

Varieties.

MARTIAL LAW AND MILITARY LAW.—The Crown is empowered to make Articles of War for the better government of the forces, and affecting none but military persons. These laws emanate wholly from the civil power, and may properly be regarded, like the ecclesiastical law, as a distinct division of the civil laws of the realm. There is, however, a great distinction, though often lost sight of, between *military* and *martial* law; the former affecting the troops or forces only, to which its terms expressly apply, equally in peace and war, by previously defined regulations; the latter extending to all the inhabitants of the district where it is in force, being wholly arbitrary, and emanating entirely from a state of intestine commotion or actual war. "Martial law is not," says Sir Matthew Hale, "in fact and reality a law, but indulged rather than allowed as law."—*Blackstone's Commentaries*, edited and adapted by Samuel Warren, D.C.L.

THE LAST WORDS OF ALGERNON SIDNEY: (being the conclusion of a paper delivered to the Sheriffs upon the scaffold on Tower Hill, Friday, Dec. 7, 1683)—"By these means I am brought to this place. The Lord forgive these practices (usurpations of power without law), and avert the evils that threaten the nation from them. The Lord sanctify these my sufferings unto me; and, though I fall as a sacrifice to idols, suffer not idolatry to be established in this land. Bless thy people and save them. Defend thy own cause, and defend those that defend it. Stir up such as are faint; direct those that are willing; confirm those that waver; give wisdom and integrity unto all. Order all things so as may most redound to thine own glory. Grant that I may die glorifying thee for all thy mercies; and at the last thou hast permitted me to be singled out as a witness of thy truth, and even by the confession of my opposers, for that old cause in which I was from my youth engaged, and for which thou hast often and wonderfully declared thyself."

IRISH BOG-LAND.—On the subject of draining bog-land, I have been favoured with the following communication from a highly respectable land-agent in the county of Limerick:—"The entire expenditure of draining and levelling about 40a. 2r. 28p. (Irish acres) of bog-land in 1861, and sowing the land with rape-seed, was £502 10s. 1d.; deduct produce of crop, £133 10s., net cost £369. The land thus reclaimed was let from 1st November, 1863, at £1 per acre for five years. I expect that at the expiration of this term the land will bring at least £1 10s. I should tell you that I did not put up the reclaimed land to public competition. I divided it among the tenants on the property adjoining, and fixed the rent myself at £1 per acre, believing it to be under the rate I would get for it if I offered it for competition." Now, supposing my friend to have charged nothing for interest of money for the two years during which the works were in progress and the crop in cultivation, here is a land rental of £40 per annum, with a probability of increase to £60, created by an outlay of £400, inclusive of interest during non-production. Taking the value of the land at twenty-five years' purchase—a much lower rate than prevails in this country—here is, on the first rental of £40, a thousand pounds' worth of property purchased by an outlay of £400, and on the supposition of the expected advance to £60, £1500, or a profit of £1100, less the nominal value of the uncultivated and nearly profitless bog. If this operation could be carried on extensively in Ireland, what great results would accrue! . . . A good joint-stock or chartered company to drain the bogs would do much more for Ireland than any resuscitation of the Phenicians.—*Biggs's "Tour in Ireland."*

ROC'S EGGS.—In 1854 M. Geoffroy de St. Hilaire exhibited to the French Academy some eggs of the Epyornis, a bird which formerly lived in Madagascar. The larger of these was 12.1 inches long, and 11.8 inches wide. The smaller one was slightly less than this. The Museum d'Histoire Naturelle at Paris also contains two eggs, both of which are larger than the one recently put up for sale, the longer axis of which measures 10 inches, and the shorter 7 inches. In the discussion which followed the reading of M. de St. Hilaire's paper, M. Valenciennes stated it was quite impossible to judge of the size of a bird by the size of its egg, and gave several instances in point. Mr. Strickland, in some "Notices of the Dodo and its Kindred," published in the "Annals of Natural History" for November 1849, says that in the previous year a Mr. Dumarele, a highly respectable French merchant at Bourbon, saw at Port Leven, Madagascar, an enormous egg which held

"thirteen wine quart bottles of fluid." The natives stated that the egg was found in the jungle, and "observed that such eggs were very, very rarely met with." Mr. Strickland appears to doubt this, but there seems no reason to do so. Allowing a pint and a half to each of the so-called "quarts," the egg would hold 19½ pints. Now the larger egg exhibited by St. Hilaire held 17½ pints, as he himself proved. The difference is not so very great. A word or two about the nests of such gigantic birds. Captain Cook found, on an island near the north-east coast of New Holland, a nest "of a most enormous size. It was built with sticks upon the ground, and was no less than six-and-twenty feet in circumference, and two feet eight inches high" (Kerr's "Collection of Voyages and Travels," xiii. 318). Captain Flinders found two similar nests on the south coasts of New Holland, in King George's Bay. In his "Voyage," etc., London, 1818, he says, "They were built upon the ground, from which they rose above two feet, and were of vast circumference and great interior capacity; the branches of trees and other matter of which each nest was composed being enough to fill a cart."

MASTER AND SERVANT.—The Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed "to inquire into the state of the law as regards contracts of service between master and servant, and as to the expediency of amending the same," agreed to the following resolutions:—"1. That the law relating to master and servant, as it now exists, is objectionable. 2. That all cases arising under the law of master and servant should be publicly tried, in England and Ireland, before two or more magistrates, or a stipendiary magistrate; and in Scotland before two or more magistrates or the sheriff. 3. That procedure should be by summons in England and Ireland, and by warrant to cite in Scotland; and, failing the appearance of defendant in answer to summons or citation, the Court should have power to grant warrant to apprehend. 4. That punishment should be by fine, and, failing payment, by distress or imprisonment. 5. That the Court should have power, where such a course is deemed advisable, to order the defendant to fulfil contract; and also, if necessary, to compel him to find security that he will duly do so. 6. That, in aggravated cases of breach of contract, causing injury to person or property, the magistrates or sheriff should have the power of awarding punishment by imprisonment instead of fine. 7. That the arrest of wages in Scotland in payment of fines should be abolished. 8. That a suggestion having been made to the Committee—viz., that in all cases of breach of contract between master and servant it should be competent to examine the parties to the action, as in civil cases, although the offence be punishable on summary conviction—the Committee are not prepared themselves to recommend the adoption of such a principle, involving as it does departure from the law of evidence in such cases, as now settled."

OPEN-AIR PREACHING.—It is to be recollected that the most beautiful and impressive doctrines of the Divine Founder of Christianity were delivered, not in the Temple, but on the Mount. Were the early and rapid progress of what is called Methodism to be attributed to any cause beyond the enthusiasm excited by its vehement faith and doctrines (the truth or error of which I presume neither to canvass nor to question), I should venture to ascribe it to the practice of preaching in the fields, and the unstudied and extemporaneous effusions of its teachers.—*Lord Byron.*

BOOKSELLERS' RETREAT.—In our article on the Booksellers' Provident Institution, in the May Part (p. 314), the name of Bevis E. Brown was printed in some copies instead of Bevis E. Green.

THE WREN.—I had gone to my bed-room at midnight, on a dark night at the end of September, and had just begun to undress, when I heard a strange tapping at my window. It was too high for fingers, and the tap seemed rather too loud for any (the largest) moth. So I opened the casement to ascertain what it was, and in flew a beautiful golden-crested wren! It was sadly frightened, and fluttered violently in my hand, and was very restless till the candle was extinguished, and I heard of it no more. In the morning it was nestled on a cornice, and as soon as I could open the window made haste to escape. I never heard of any instance of a similar kind, and have only to add that there are tufts of ivy climbing on the walls, within eight or ten feet of the light which had attracted this nocturnal visitor.